REMARKS

The amendments to the claims do not add new matter. Rather, they have either cancelled non-elected claims or conformed the elected claims to the elected species of Figs. 1B-1E. Specifically, the amendment to claim 6 and its dependents, which recites that the implant comprises an "assembled bone block," is found throughout the specification, including at page 4, lines 4-5 ("Figures 1B-E represent an implant comprising a specific assembled bone block."); and at page 18, lines 22-24 ("Furthermore, a bone block may be used that comprises an assembled block formed from two or more individual segments fastened together."). The amendment to claim 6, which recites that the assembled bone block comprises "a first segment of cortical bone and a second segment of cortical bone that are shaped to interlock with one another," is supported throughout the specification, including at page 8, lines 25-26 ("The bone block is comprised of two interlocking substantially planar pieces, 151a and 151b, that comprise a slot 163 and slip together to present four fins, 152a-d, that radiate from a center point, 154. ").

Claim 8, which was amended to recite that the segments of the assembled bone block are "slotted," is supported throughout the specification, including at Figs. 1B-1E, at page 16, line 29 ("slotted section 165"); and in the deleted text from originally filed claim 8.

Claim 9, which was amended to recite that the first segment of cortical bone is "demineralized," is supported throughout the specification, including at page 18, lines 26-27 ("The bone segments may be mineralized, or partially or fully demineralized. ").

Claim 10, which was amended to recite that said at least one section of flexible material is "selected from the group consisting of ligament, tendon, muscle, dura, pericardium, fascia, peritoneum, and demineralized bone," is supported throughout the specification, including at page 2, lines 11-13 ("other soft tissues can be used such as ligament, tendon, muscle, dura, pericardium, fascia, and peritoneum, as well as demineralized bone").

Independent claim 11, which was amended to recite "said at least one assembled bone block comprising two interconnected segments of allograft or xenograft

cortical bone," is supported throughout the specification, including at page 18, lines 22-25 ("Furthermore, a block may be used that comprises an assembled block formed from two or more individual segments fastened together. The block made be made from cortical, cancellous bone segments, or both that are obtained from allogenic, autogenic, or xenogenic sources").

Claim 14, which was amended to recite that the assembled bone block is composed of "slotted" segments of "cortical bone" are supported throughout the specification, including at Figs. 1B-1E; at page 16, line 29 ("slotted section 165"); and at page 18, lines 22-25 ("Furthermore, a block may be used that comprises an assembled block formed from two or more individual segments fastened together. The block made be made from cortical, cancellous bone segments. . .").

Claims 15-23, have been amended in conformity with claim 14 to reflect the antecedent "bone block" of claim 14 is "assembled."

Claim 27 was amended by inclusion of the word "said" to reflect the antecedent nature of the "bone-ended graft."

Independent claims 28-34, which were amended with clarifying language, are fully supported by the original language within the claims themselves.

Claim 35, which was amended to recite that said at least one section of flexible material is "selected from the group consisting of ligament, tendon, muscle, dura, pericardium, fascia, peritoneum, and demineralized bone," is supported throughout the specification, including at page 2, lines 11-13 ("other soft tissues can be used such as ligament, tendon, muscle, dura, pericardium, fascia, and peritoneum, as well as demineralized bone").

Claims 64-66, which were amended to recite that the bone block was "assembled," is supported throughout the specification, including at page 4, lines 4-5 ("Figures 1B-E represent an implant comprising a specific assembled bone block."); and at page 18, lines 22-24 ("Furthermore, a bone block may be used that comprises an assembled block formed from two or more individual segments fastened together.").

The amendment to claim 68, which describes the general structure for a bone-tissue-bone implant, wherein the bone is an "assembled bone block" is supported throughout the specification as already cited above and generally in Figs. 3A, 3B and 4, and the two bone blocks are supported at page 2, line 20 ("one or more bone blocks").

Claim 70, which has been amended to recite that the "the first end and the second end of said middle section are calcified," is supported throughout the specification, including at page 3, lines 15-16 ("As disclosed herein, the ends of the dermis for such use are preferably calcified . . .").

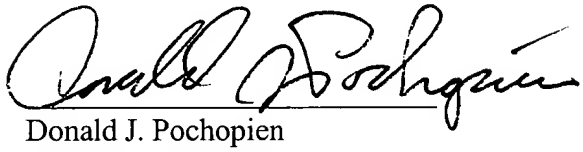
Claims 71 and 72 have been amended to recite that the top section and the bottom section comprise "allograft bone" and "xenograft bone" respectively, is supported throughout the specification, including at page 2, lines 13-14 (Tissues can be derived from allogenic, autogenic, or xenogenic sources") and at page 24, lines 18-19 ("Those skilled in the art will appreciate that the graft may be autograft, allograft, or xenograft.").

Claims 73 and 74 were amended by restructuring the language of the claims. In addition, the amendment to claim 73, which recites the use of the implant as a "tension band," is supported throughout the specification, including at page 3, lines 4-6 ("Another aspect of the present invention is the use of the processed dermis . . . as a spinal tension band (STB) or other type of tension band.")

For all these reasons, the amendments to the claims are fully supported by the disclosures in the specification and do not add new matter.

Respectfully submitted,

MCANDREWS, HELD & MALLOY, LTD.

By 

Donald J. Pochopien
Registration No. 32,167
Attorney of Record
500 West Madison, 34th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60661
(312) 775-8133

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